LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An isolated MATER protein comprising the amino acid sequence of

~~(a)~~ SEQ ID NO: 24~~;~~

~~(b) a fragment of SEQ ID NO: 24 comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO :2 or SEQ ID NO: 4;or~~

~~(c) a variant MATER protein, which variant MATER protein is specifically bound by a MATER protein specific binding agent~~.

2. - 37. (cancelled)

38. (Previously presented) The isolated MATER protein of claim 1, wherein the MATER protein is encoded by a nucleic acid with the polynucleotide sequence of~~:~~

~~(a)~~ SEQ ID NO: 23 or a nucleotide sequence that encodes a MATER protein, but which varies from SEQ ID NO: 23 by virtue of the degeneracy of the genetic code~~;~~

~~(b) a fragment of SEQ ID NO:23 comprising SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:3; or~~

~~(c) a polynucleotide sequence that hybridizes to SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3 or SEQ ID NO:23 under high stringency conditions~~.

39. (New) The isolated MATER protein of claim 1, further comprising an epitope tag.

40. (New) The isolated MATER protein of claim 1, wherein the MATER protein is a fusion protein comprising an amino terminal peptide of a protein other than MATER.